

Journal Inquirer

April 8, 2015

**Joint Committee on Judiciary
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 2500
Hartford, CT 06106**

Dear Committee Members:

Eight years ago I spoke at your public hearing on Governor Rell's nomination of Chase T. Rogers to be Connecticut's chief justice, urging you to press her about the secrecy and unaccountability of the Judicial Department, problems that recently had become scandalous.

Now that Rogers' term is expiring and she has been renominated, I was distressed to learn today that she is being opposed. For while the Judicial Department still has problems, secrecy and unaccountability are no longer among them.

To the contrary, under Rogers the Judicial Department may have become the most open and accountable agency of state government even though it remains largely exempt from Connecticut's Freedom of Information Act. That it, the department got so much better even though, as a matter of law, it didn't have to.

Journalists no longer have to struggle with and cajole the department to obtain even the most basic information about cases. Information is usually freely provided and difficulties are almost always resolved favorably with a call to the department's public relations office. The department closely monitors public access issues and regularly addresses them through a committee the chief justice established that meets twice a year. I have been a member of that committee and am very grateful for its work.

[MORE]

Page 2, Joint Committee on Judiciary

April 8, 2015

Under Rogers the department has lost its fear of answering for itself and increasingly recognizes that justice in a democracy is everybody's business, that due process of law is our cherished heritage as citizens, and that it can endure only if the public understands it.

Please recommend her reappointment.

With good wishes.



CHRIS POWELL
Managing Editor

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